National Highway. Communications were also received from Members of Parliament in this regard. However, this could not be declared as National Highway so far due to paucity of funds.

लखनऊ में टेलीफोन सलाहकार समिति का गठन

*248. **श्री राजनाथ सिंह सूर्य:** क्या संचार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) टेलीफोन सलाहकार समिति के गठन की प्रक्रिया, उसका कार्यकाल तथा विनिर्दिष्ट सदस्य संख्या क्या है;

(ख) लखनऊ में टेलीफोन सलाहकार समिति का गठन कब हुआ था और इसमें कुल कितने सदस्य थे;

(ग) क्या ये सभी सदस्य सदस्यता संबंधी अर्हताएं पूरी करते थे, यदि हां तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है, और यदि नहीं तो उक्त समिति में ऐसे सदस्यों को नाम-निर्देशित करने के क्या कारण हैं; और

(घ) प्रत्येक सदस्य की ओर टेलीफोन बिलों की कितनी-कितनी राशि बकाया है?

संचार मंत्री (श्री बेनी प्रसाद वर्मा): (क) टेलीफोन सलाहकार समिति का गठन दो वर्ष की अवधि के लिए मुख्यमहाप्रबंधकों/महाप्रबंधकों/संसद सदस्यों/विधायकों से प्राप्त सिफारिशों तथा सीधे दूरसंचार विभाग (मुख्यालय) राज्य/संघ शासित राज्य तथा टेलीफोन जिलों में प्राप्त अभ्यावेदन/सिफारिशों तथा साथ ही विभिन्न प्रयोक्ता वर्गों, जैसे सार्वजनिक कार्यकर्त्ताओं, इंजीनियरों, चिकित्सकों, व्यापारियों वाणिज्यिक क्षेत्र आदि के व्यक्तियों का प्रतिनिधित्व देने की आवश्यकता को ध्यान में रखते हुए किया जाता है। प्रत्येक टेलीफोन सलाहकार समिति के सदस्यों की विनिर्दिष्ट संख्या आयुक्त में दी गई है। [देखिए परिशिष्ट 180, अपत्र सं० 44]

(ख) लखनऊ टेलीफोन सलाहकार समिति का गठन जून, 1995 में किया गया था। इस समिति के सदस्यों की कुल संख्या 70 है।

(ग) जी, हां। लखनऊ टेलीफोन सलाहकार समिति के सदस्य निम्नलिखित निर्धारित किसी न किसी श्रेणी से संबंधित हैं, जो इस प्रकार है:—

1. राज्य विधान मंडल—दो (2) प्रेस—पांच (3) कानूनी व्यवसाय—दो (4) सार्वजनिक कार्यकर्ता एवं अन्य—इकसठ

(घ) प्रत्येक सदस्य की ओर बकाया टेलीफोन बिल की राशि का ब्यौरा विवरण में दिया गया है।

Indians killed by Srilankan Navy

*249. SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Indian nationals, including fishermen were killed in the Indian ocean by Srilankan Navy in the recent past;

(b) if so, the number of such casualities in lst three years, year-wise; and

(c) whether matter has recently been taken with Srilankan government; if so, the outcome of such talks?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) to (c) Incidents of violence and detention faced by the Indian fishermen in the Palk Straits arise when they stray into Sri Lankan territorial waters and some times move close to the coast of the shores where conflict is raging. The Government received reports about 14 incidents of shooting at Indian fishing vessels in the Palk Straits resulting in the death of 6 fishermen in 1994, 12 incidents of shooting resulting in the death of 9 fishermen in 1995 and 19 incidents of shooting resulting in the death of 10 fishermen in 1996. The Sri Lankan Navy acknowledeged its involvement in incidents resulting in the reported deaths of 2 fishermen in 1994 and 5 fishermen in 1996, while denying their inolvement in all incidents reported in 1995.

India protests at every incident of violence against its fishermen and has emphasized to the Government of Sri Lanka the need for restraint in dealing with fishermen.

The External Affairs Minister during his recent visit to Sri lankan (January 19—22, 1997) discussed the problems faced by Indian fishermen with the Sri Lankan foreign Minister and conveyed

our serious concern at the incidents of violence against them. Both sides agreed on the need to take steps to avoid untoward incidents in each other's waters and to address the problems faced by the fishermen in a spirit of compassion and understanding.

Further discussions on problems faced by the Fishermen were held during a visit by a Sri Lankan delegation in February, 1997. Both sides agreed to examine modalities to ensure the safety of fishermen and to deal with cases of fishermen straying across the International Boundary Line in a practical and safe manner.

Ayurvedic Medical Treatment Facilities for P&T Employees

*250. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ayurvedic medical treatment facilities are available at the hospital run by the Department of Posts for its employees; if so, the details of the places where such facilities are available; and

(b) whether the Department of Telecommunications also propose to provide such facilities for all of its employees in the hospitals run by it; if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) There are 56 P&T dispensaries located in 48 stations all over the country which provide out-door treatment for P&T employees, their families as well as pensioners. These beneficiaries can avail themselves of Ayurvedic medicines on being referred to Government and other recognised hospitals by the P&T doctors. Certain common branded Ayurvedic medicines are included in the P&T Formulary (list of medicines which are to be stocked by the P&T Dispensaries) which are disbursed, on the prescription of Specialist. The Ayurvedic medicines which are not included in the Formulary, but are prescribed by Ayurvedic Government authorised Doctor of any hospital, can be procured from local authorised Chemist. As such, there is no denial of Ayurvedic treatment to P&T employees/pensioners where our dispensaries are located.

(b) All the P&T Dispensaries are under the administrative control of Department of Posts even though the beneficiaries included the Telecom officials/pensioners and their family members.

Amount spent on development of Handicrafts

*251. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount spent on the development of handicrafts during the year 1996-97 in the different parts of the country, State-wise;

(b) the steps taken by Government for the development of handicrafts;

(c) the details of incentives and facilities that are given to the rural artisans to promote handicrafts in the country; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the necessary steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) A statement showing total amount of grant released to various States during 1996-97 for the development of handicrafts in the country is enclosed (*See* below)

(b) For development of handicrafts, the steps taken by the Government are as follows:—

(i) Training;

(ii) Design & Technical Development;

(iii) Marketing programme viz craft